

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Employment Committee Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2019

Members Present

Nathan Pullen
Ben Fox
Bea Shapiro
David Steinmetz
Terri Hedgpeth

Members Absent

Jordan Moon
Kevin Foster
Terrell Welch

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Nathan Pullen called the meeting to order at 2:02 am in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made a quorum was present.

Approval of the March 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Ben Fox motioned to approve the minutes from the March 6, 2019 meeting. David Steinmetz seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Employment Committee Activity Discussion

Nathan Pullen summarized that the Employment Committee planned to hold more frequent or quarterly events, although the committee had not identified the date for the next event. Nathan Pullen stated the previous event was an Employer Round Table event and the committee had discussed that the next event would be an employee or job seeker focused event. Mr. Pullen noted the committee had discussed scheduling an event through the committee or potentially participating in an event or consumer group conference. Ben Fox inquired whether the committee would consider

partnering with Google or the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) in Arizona. David Steinmetz inquired stated that school would be out for the summer and inquired whether the committee should consider holding an event for employers. Terri Hedgpeth stated the committee could potentially hold an event focused on employment readiness. Ms. Hedgpeth stated that a representative from Arizona State University might be willing to attend and hold mock interviews as an example of what to do and not do during an interview. Nathan Pullen stated the Employment Committee held a breakout session during the previous National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) although the session was not well attended and the individuals that attended were not well prepared. Mr. Pullen stated the committee could consider holding a similar event and work with the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors and comprehensive services programs to ensure that the job seekers were well prepared to talk to the employers. Bea Shapiro suggested that VR clients in Status 20, or in the job ready status, be invited to attend that type of event. Nathan Pullen agreed and stated the committee could develop recommendations to the VR counselors regarding the types of things that employers are looking for in employees. David Steinmetz stated the Public Information Committee had developed an Essential Employment Skills document that had been used by the comprehensive services programs and counselors to help educate individuals. Mr. Steinmetz added that the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) would be offering a training to clients and he would share that information with the committee.

Nathan Pullen suggested the committee discuss potential dates for the next committee event. He noted that the committee could consider participating in the next consumer event, because those events were often well attended. Terri Hedgpeth suggested the committee distribute the event flyers and agendas approximately three weeks prior to the event so that employers or job seekers would have more advance notice of the event. Nathan Pullen agreed and noted the committee chose the previous event date to be able to announce at the E75 Breakfast Event. He added that he would rather that the committee did not arbitrarily choose a date but should hold an impactful event. Bea Shapiro stated the committee could tentatively schedule dates for events and cancel or reschedule the events as needed. Nathan Pullen stated the committee had previously discussed holding quarterly events, but there was more benefit to holding quality events. Ben Fox stated there was a benefit to having more notice of an event when talking to employers about sponsorship. Terri Hedgpeth stated the committee could distribute the flyers and invites to the event a month prior to the event and send out periodic reminders to individuals 2 weeks or 1 week prior to the event as well. David Steinmetz stated he would see if the FBC had planned to hold a training event, and the committee could potentially participate on that event.

Terri Hedgpeth suggested the committee consider holding an event at the end of July so as not to conflict with other events. Nathan Pullen inquired whether the committee should wait until committee members could report back on events that other organizations were having. Terri Hedgpeth suggested the committee schedule the next event for July 24, 2019. Nathan Pullen inquired whether that date coincided with a consumer group event. Terri Hedgpeth stated the date did not coincide with any events but would give the committee time to plan for the event. Nathan Pullen stated the committee could tentatively schedule the next event for July 24, 2019 and shift the date if necessary. Terri Hedgpeth suggested the committee obtain counselor input in June regarding the number of job ready clients. Bea Shapiro inquired whether the committee should create a name for the event that would be impactful. Nathan Pullen suggested the committee continue to use the E75 name for events, although the committee could include any corporate sponsorship into the event name. David Steinmetz suggested the committee identify the type of event before creating a name for the event. Terri Hedgpeth stated her understanding that the committee wanted to target job ready individuals. Nathan Pullen agreed and noted the committee could also target a third audience, or the support staff of counselors and comprehensive services providers. Bea Shapiro stated that often the worksite evaluations did not identify the tools that the clients required. Nathan Pullen stated the committee could offer best practices or share success stories to counselors, although the committee did not want to appear to be telling the counselors how to do their jobs. Terri Hedgpeth stated the committee could develop a survey for employers regarding the important aspects of onboarding a new employee. Ms. Hedgpeth noted the survey did not have to focus on employment of individuals with disabilities. Nathan Pullen noted that Terrell Welch would be a great resource for developing a survey. Terri Hedgpeth stated the committee could use the information learned from the survey at the next committee event. Ben Fox stated that a survey could be put on the E75 website. Nathan Pullen stated the Department of Economic Security (DES) had an account with Survey Monkey, although the E75 website could potentially be the landing page for the survey. Nathan Pullen noted the committee would need to develop survey questions and identify how to use the data. Terri Hedgpeth stated she had experience developing surveys and would be willing to work with Terrell Welch on the development of the survey questions. Ben Fox stated that he was in the process of talking to Google about a potential partnership. Mr. Fox added that Microsoft had hired several blind or visually impaired employees, which could lead to a partnership as well, although he did not have specifics yet.

David Steinmetz inquired whether the committee would participate in the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE). Nathan Pullen stated the Employment Committee had presented at VRATE in the past, although the VRATE audience was typically older individuals that were interested in independent living resources rather than employment. Terri Hedgpeth stated if the committee did present at VRATE, the committee should consider presenting in the morning and not present the same time as a technology presentation. Nathan Pullen agreed and stated that some committee members would be participating in the AT Committee presentation. Mr. Pullen noted that the AT Committee and the Employment Committee could potentially provide a combined presentation on job related assistive technology. Terri Hedgpeth inquired regarding the time and location of VRATE. Ben Fox stated that VRATE would be November 15-16 at the Glendale Civic Center.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Employment Committee will be on May 30, 2019, from 3:00 to 4:00 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- Employment Committee Activity Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

A call was made to the public with no response's forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Bea Shapiro motioned to adjourn the meeting. Terri Hedgpeth seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.